

**From:** mtsholder@aol.com [mailto:mtsholder@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, October 07, 2011 9:25 AM  
**To:** FS-comments-northern-helena  
**Subject:** Mike Horse

Brian Sholder  
P.O Box 355  
Lincoln, MT. 59639

After reviewing the remediation document for the Mike Horse Mine clean-up, I am against any site that either moves the contaminated soil into Blackfoot Watershed without an independent review. This document is extremely flawed and incomplete. I am aware that something has to be done regarding the mine clean-up, but making hasty critical decisions that are biased and based solely for financial reasons (the least expensive way and the conditions of the Sarco \$39,000,000.00 bankruptcy settlement) at the expense of the Blackfoot River, Blackfoot Valley and the citizens of Lincoln is wrong. I am also proposing an additional engineering firm be appointed by the citizens of Lincoln and the Blackfoot Valley to do studies independent of this initial study, at the DEQ's and Forest Services expense. If you went to a doctor and he was proposing a life threatening operation; Would you not get a second opinion?

This whole process in choosing a suitable site has not been transparent from the beginning. The \$39,000,000 Sarco settlement; land swaps with Stimson Lumber and the DEQ; an agreement already in place with Baucus's, and finally designating a large area outside the contaminated area as a Super Fund area are just a few examples.

The \$39,000,000 settlement with Sarco specifies that the contaminated material must be removed. The Forest Service has done a wonderful job temporarily diverting Bear Trap Creek, keeping water off the dam, and preventing further contamination. I was up there at the worst possible time, during this year's Spring run off and everything was totally controlled. In fact, the 2 big red pumps were not even running! I also happened to meet George Kornec who as you know has been mining above the dam for years. He is a person that has lived there for years and is extremely familiar with the area. His opinion regarding what to do with the mine tailings has been ignored by the DEQ and Forest Service. You have sluffed him off as an old salty character. I begged to differ with you. He has more practical experience than any engineer operating out of an office. He explained to me the easiest way to solve this problem and possibly the least expensive, with minimal environmental impact is to permanently divert Bear Trap Creek and secure the water from ever accumulating on the dam. Has this suggestion not been researched because you are obligated to spending and moving the tailings in the \$39,000,000 Sarco settlement? In your studies, I do not even see this was researched. With the technical capabilities we have, including large boring machines (Suggested by a respected citizen of Lincoln), I cannot not believe the mine tailings could not be permanently entombed and prevent potentially contaminating another site. Lets start thinking outside the box.

As mentioned above, declaring a large area outside the contaminated site as a Super Fund site so that you could include section 35 into the area and operate under Cercla rules, only makes the citizens of Lincoln and the Blackfoot Valley suspicious. Did the Forest Service and the DEQ conspire to do this so that Stimson Lumber and the DEQ could enter into a Land swap agreement? Why has a deal been made with the Baucus's?

As a resident that lives east of Lincoln, I am concerned and suspicious regarding the DEQ's and the Forest Service using the present data and studies to make a final decision. The decision to move the contaminated mine tailings can potentially affect the Blackfoot River, but also the health and welfare of the citizens of Lincoln and the Blackfoot Valley. In addition, the 9 residences that live close to the proposed section 35 site are directly impacted emotionally and financially. Take a step back from your government positions and just pretend this was happening to you and your community. To allow the citizens of Lincoln and the Blackfoot Valley an independent review of this process and paid for by the bankruptcy settlement is a reasonable request. I would like to see this project move forward but am afraid

it will end up in court with large court cost, environmental impact studies and delays. Is this what you want?

Let step back and rethink what we are doing here and get the citizens of Lincoln and the Blackfoot Valley residences on board with a plan.

Than You